

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 412

To require an independent evaluation of distance education programs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 11, 2007

Mr. EHLERS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To require an independent evaluation of distance education
programs.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Independent Study of
5 Distance Education Act of 2007”.

6 **SEC. 2. INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF DISTANCE EDU-**
7 **CATION PROGRAMS.**

8 (a) INDEPENDENT EVALUATION.—The Secretary of
9 Education shall enter into an agreement with the National
10 Academy of Sciences to conduct a scientifically correct,
11 statistically valid evaluation of the quality of distance edu-

1 cation programs, as compared to campus-based education
2 programs, at institutions of higher education. Such eval-
3 uation shall include—

4 (1) identification of the elements by which the
5 quality of distance education, as compared to cam-
6 pus-based education, can be assessed, including ele-
7 ments such as subject matter, interactivity, and stu-
8 dent outcomes;

9 (2) identification of distance and campus-based
10 education program success, with respect to student
11 achievement, in relation to the mission of the insti-
12 tution of higher education; and

13 (3) by assessing elements including access to
14 higher education, job placement rates, under-
15 graduate graduation rates, and graduate and profes-
16 sional degree attainment rates, identification of the
17 types of students (including classification of types of
18 students based on student age)—

19 (A) who most benefit from distance edu-
20 cation programs;

21 (B) who most benefit from campus-based
22 education programs; and

23 (C) who do not benefit from distance edu-
24 cation programs.

1 (b) SCOPE.—The National Academy of Sciences shall
2 select for participation in the evaluation under subsection
3 (a) a diverse group of institutions of higher education with
4 respect to size, mission, and geographic distribution.

5 (c) INTERIM AND FINAL REPORTS.—The agreement
6 under subsection (a) shall require that the National Acad-
7 emy of Sciences submit to the Secretary of Education, the
8 Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions of
9 the Senate, and the Committee on Education and Labor
10 of the House of Representatives—

11 (1) an interim report regarding the evaluation
12 under subsection (a) not later than six months after
13 the date of enactment of this Act; and

14 (2) a final report regarding such evaluation not
15 later than one year after the date of enactment of
16 this Act.

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